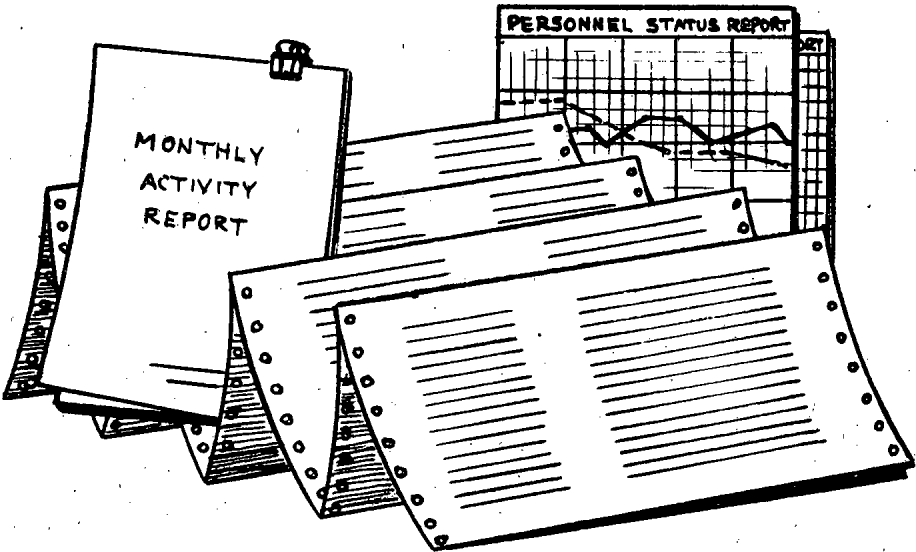


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**OPERATING AN AREA
REPORTS MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM**



FEWER REPORTS - BETTER REPORTS - AT LESS COST

MANAGEMENT STAFF
RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION

MAY 1955

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OPERATING AN AREA REPORTS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Section A. GENERAL

1. This pamphlet provides Reports Control Authorities with basic guidance for operating area reports management programs. It is for use in conjunction with the following guides also available from the Records Management Division, Management Staff.
 - a. "An Introduction to Reports Management"
 - b. Sample Office Notice Inaugurating a Reports Management Program.
 - c. Sample Office Regulation for Operating a Reports Management Program.
 - d. "Analyzing Requirements for Administrative and Management Reports."

It is recommended that guides a, b, and c be read prior to this pamphlet.

2. Throughout this pamphlet "reports" and "reporting requirements" are used synonymously. Also, the following terms are used to simplify stating procedures:
 - a. Required Report (Incoming Report) - A report which a component requires from one or more elements. The report is an incoming report to the office which requires it.
 - b. Prepared Report (Outgoing Report) - A report which a component prepares at the request of another element. The report is an outgoing report from the office which prepares it.
 - c. Feeder Report - A report which supplies data needed to prepare another report.

Section B. REPORTS CONTROL AUTHORITY'S RECORDS

1. Case Files.

a. Material collected during the installation phase of the program will provide a basis for establishing a case folder on each reporting requirement. Thereafter these files are kept current or cancelled as changes occur. A case folder should furnish the complete history of a report and its current status. Each folder should contain the following in the order indicated:

- (1) Form No. 142, Request for Approval of a New or Revised Reporting Requirement (Appendix A), or Form No. 521, Report Survey (Appendix B).
- (2) A specimen copy of the report (if available) or a sample of the report form.
- (3) A copy of each directive affecting the report, and if available, instructions for its preparation.
- (4) Memorandums, staff studies, surveys, data on source records and procedures, and other material pertaining to the report.

b. The label of each folder should contain the title of the report, its reports control symbol, and a subject-numeric file index taken from the Handbook for Subject Filing.

Titles are stated with a key word first so that a folder may be readily identified. For example, "Monthly Report of Per Diem Allowances" would be stated "Per Diem Allowances; Monthly Report of." A completed folder label would appear as follows:

ACCOUNTING 2-1 PER DIEM ALLOWANCES: MONTHLY
PER DIEM REPORT OF (COMP-Rep-1)

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Different colored labels should be used for prepared and required reports. [] gives further information on case folders and their filing arrangement.

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2. Follow-up File. The success of a reports management program depends in large part upon a periodic reappraisal of each reporting requirement. To schedule these reviews the Reports Control Authority should maintain a follow-up card on each report.

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5" x 8" or 3" x 5" cards in a vertical file are recommended. Each card should bear the scheduled reappraisal date, the title of the report, its reports control symbol, and the subject-numeric file index of the report. The card file should be indexed by month, and within each monthly breakdown arranged according to the reappraisal date. Cards for a current month may be separated by daily guides numbered from 1 through 31 if the number of reports justifies this arrangement.

3. Reports Control Symbol Index. An index is needed to ensure assignment of reports control symbols in the correct sequence. The index also serves as a cross reference by symbol number. A vertical file of 5" x 8" or 3" x 5" cards is recommended. Each card should show the reports control symbol, the title of the report, its subject-numeric file index, and the date the reports control symbol was assigned.
4. Alphabetical Cross Reference. A Reports Control Authority may wish to maintain an alphabetical index of the reports under his jurisdiction. 5" x 8" or 3" x 5" cards in a vertical file are suggested. Each card should show the title of the report (stated with a key word first), the reports control symbol, and the subject-numeric file index. Additional information may be kept on these cards. However, extensive posting to them is discouraged since case folders should fully document each reporting requirement.
5. Accomplishment Records. To be in a position to report accomplishments and to develop program publicity, Reports Control Authorities should draft briefs on projects and surveys being undertaken and major accomplishments. Also, a record of the following actions should be maintained:
 - a. The number of proposals for required reports:
 - (1) Received and approved.
 - (2) Developed and approved.
 - (3) Disapproved.
 - b. The number of required reports revised:
 - (1) To provide more adequate data.
 - (2) To reduce paperwork.
 - (3) For miscellaneous changes.
 - c. The number of existing required reports cancelled.

- d. The number of report directives developed or revised.
- e. The number of prepared reports for which improvements were recommended.
- f. The current reports inventory by:
 - (1) Required Reports:
 - (a) Feeder Reports
 - (b) Other
 - (2) Prepared Reports
- g. Savings (in man days per year) accruing from reports management activity.
- h. Man days expended on the program.

**Section C. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PROPOSALS FOR NEW OR REVISED
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

1. Submission of Requests for Approval. All proposals to establish or revise a reporting requirement should be submitted to the appropriate Reports Control Authority for approval. Originators should submit the following material through channels:
 - a. An original and one copy of Form No. 142, Request for Approval of a New or Revised Reporting Requirement (Appendix A).
 - b. An original and one copy (in draft form) of the proposed report directive, and all forms, instructions, and procedures proposed to be issued.
 - c. Any additional supporting material that will assist the approving official with his review.
2. Review of Requests for Approval.
 - a. Purpose. The axiom, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" points up the value of a thorough review of each reporting requirement when first proposed. It is then, rather, than after the requirement is established, that

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improvements can be made with minimum effort and maximum savings. Naturally there is less resistance to change at the proposal stage. Reports Control Authorities will also find this an opportune time to overcome any "rubber stamp control" misconceptions, and to demonstrate the benefits of reports management.

- b. Determining the Need. The first step in reviewing a new requirement is to establish the need for and the use of the proposed report. If the report does not meet all the criteria below, it should be disapproved without further analysis. To be considered essential, the report should:
 - (1) Be commensurate with functional authority and the intent of delegations of authority.
 - (2) Be timely and useful.
 - (3) Not duplicate other reporting requirements.
 - (4) Fulfill a valid need of those who will review and evaluate its contents.
 - (5) Be worth its total cost.
- c. Detailed Analysis. If the need is confirmed, the proposed requirement should then be analyzed in detail as described in "Analyzing Requirements For Administrative and Management Reports" (Appendix C), and paragraph 4, page 9. Assure that the following essentials answer the need for the report:
 - (1) Realistic reporting frequency.
 - (2) Practical due date.
 - (3) Efficient format.
 - (4) Clear and complete written directive.
 - (5) Realistic requirements for copies.
 - (6) Economical and efficient preparation and submission procedures.

If the report, or any part of the report, is found to be unsatisfactory, the Reports Control Authority should make positive suggestions for changes before the request is approved. Any suggestions should recommend similar changes in the proposed requiring directive.

d. Analysis Aids.

- (1) Subject-Numeric File of Case Folders. This file should be referred to first in your analysis. It will disclose whether the report being reviewed duplicates or is related to other reports prepared or required by your component.
- (2) Interviews and Observations. The Reports Control Authority should not draw conclusions without discussing the proposal with its originator and investigating how the report will be used. Questions such as: "What created the need for this report?"--"What would be the consequences if you couldn't be supplied the information?"--"How will the information be used?"--"What records will be maintained from the information you will receive?" will draw out justifications for the report as well as additional ideas for its improvement.

Personnel in offices where the report will be prepared should also be interviewed if possible. Discussions and observations at this level will often point up improvements or preparation problems overlooked by the originator of the proposal. Furthermore, soliciting the views of those who will be responsible for preparing the report will encourage a cooperative response to the requirement.

- (3) Staff Guidance. Assistance on reports management matters is furnished by the Reports and Correspondence Management Branch, Management Staff. Advice on forms management, record systems, and records disposition can also be obtained simultaneously from other branches of the Records Management Division, Management Staff.

3. Assigning Reports Control Symbols

- a. Purpose. Each reporting requirement approved by a Reports Control Authority is assigned a reports control symbol. The symbol identifies a requirement and indicates to activities or offices which are to prepare the report that the requirement has been approved by appropriate authority.
- b. Composing a Reports Control Symbol. A reports control symbol is composed of the organizational symbol of the component which requires the report, the abbreviation "rep" for "report", and the numerical designation of the reporting requirement. Reporting requirements approved at the Office level bear the organizational symbol of the Office only--e.g., OTR-Rep-1. Requirements approved at staff or division levels bear the respective component designation without the parent Office prefix--e.g., MT/BS-Rep-1.

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Numerical designations are assigned in consecutive order as reporting requirements are approved by a Reports Control Authority. A revised requirement generally retains its original numerical designation unless for some reason it is advisable to cancel the old number and assign a new one. Feeder reports are given the same symbol as that assigned at the top echelon where the requirement originated.

c. Where to Put the Reports Control Symbol.

- (1) In Directives, Handbooks and Correspondence - The symbol, preceded by the words "Reports Control Symbol," should appear in parentheses immediately following the first statement of the report title.
- (2) On Report Forms - The symbol should appear on each new recurring report form and on each existing recurring report form when it is reprinted.

4. Notification of Action Taken on Requests for Approval. Upon completing his review of a request, the Reports Control Authority records his decision (and the reports control symbol, if appropriate) on the original and copy of Form No. 142. The copy of Form No. 142, the proposed directive, and any supporting material are returned to the originator. The originals of the material submitted by the originator are made a part of the Reports Control Authority's records.

Section D. SCHEDULING AND CONDUCTING
REAPPRAISALS OF REPORTS

1. Purpose. A common weakness in the reports management programs of some agencies is the lack of a "built in" mechanism for a day-to-day reappraisal of reports. Consequently, these agencies find it necessary every two years or so to conduct a "crash" survey, that is, an emergency screening of all reports throughout the agency. While these surveys produce beneficial results, they also disrupt office routine by the workload they impose in a short period. Effective reports management calls for a continuing reappraisal of reports. Changing conditions must be met promptly with appropriate changes in reporting requirements.
2. Scheduling Reappraisals.
 - a. It is difficult to state in specific terms how frequently reappraisals should be scheduled. However, as a minimum:

- (1) Each new or revised report should be reappraised within three months after submission of the first report and each year thereafter.
 - (2) Each existing report should be reviewed annually.
 - b. The Reports Control Authority is responsible for maintaining a follow-up file (paragraph 2, page 2) to ensure that reappraisals are undertaken according to an effective schedule. In scheduling these reviews the Reports Control Authority should consider:
 - (1) The need for a re-evaluation based on changes in conditions.
 - (2) The desirability of appraising reports according to functional areas, subject groups, or organizational areas.
 - (3) The desirability of staggering reviews throughout the year to distribute the workload evenly.
 - c. It is emphasized that prepared as well as required reports should be scheduled for review. Although the Reports Control Authority has no direct control over most reporting requirements imposed on his component, he is not restricted from submitting recommendations to requiring offices. Indeed, he is in the most favorable position to recognize potential improvements that will affect both his component and the requiring office.
3. Initiating Reappraisals.
- a. Two methods of initiating reappraisals are open to Reports Control Authorities--personal contact and submitting a questionnaire. The former method is preferred. Personal contact conveys a feeling of sincere interest, encourages the exchange of ideas, makes possible observations of how the report is processed or used, and ensures collection of complete data.
 - b. Certain circumstances may prevent initiating a reappraisal by an interview. However, the survey should not be delayed, for the success of your reappraisal program depends on the timeliness of reviews. As a substitute for the initial interview, submit to the respective offices copies of Form No. 521, Report Survey, for completion and return. Appendix D is a sample form memorandum for submitting Form No. 521 to a component outside the jurisdiction of a Reports Control Authority. Appendix E may be used to forward Form No. 521 to a component under the jurisdiction of a Reports Control

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Authority. Again, the use of Form No. 521 to initiate a reappraisal is only an interim measure. The Reports Control Authority will still find it desirable to discuss the report with those concerned with its submission and use, and to conduct a detailed analysis.

4. Detailed Analysis.

a. Analysis by Type. A detailed analysis of each report may be made in any one of the following ways as determined by reappraisal schedules:

- (1) By Subject - Analyze all of the reports under one subject classification as a group, taking one group at a time. The first step will be to obtain copies of the source records and related procedure forms used for each report in the area studied.
- (2) By Organizational Unit - Study all of the reports required or prepared by each organizational unit of the component.
- (3) By Individual Report - Analyze each report by itself. Consider the need for each item, the frequency of submission, the methods used to prepare the report, and the way in which information is organized and presented. One report can be profitably analyzed by itself when it does not duplicate other reports nor tie in with a reporting system.

b. Determine the Need for Each Report Item. Reported items should be as few as necessary. Each item should have a definite use, either with respect to immediate objectives or definitely anticipated needs. Each item should be used currently by the recipient of the report. The analyst may be able to take necessary items from one report and add them to another, thus making fewer reports. The fewer the reports, the simpler the controls will be. The analyst can materially assist in eliminating conflicts by obtaining a uniform definition of items so that the possibility of misinterpretation is reduced to a minimum. The analysis of each report requires a study of all related information available. In making such analyses, the analyst should:

- (1) Obtain related reports from the case files. Analyze all related reports item by item, entering such items on the worksheet illustrated in Appendix F. Point up areas of duplication and make recommendations for consolidating the reports.
- (2) Determine the need for each item by obtaining accurate answers to the following questions:

- (a) Is each item under the jurisdiction of the requiring office?
- (b) Is each item required for an established objective? Why?
- (c) Could the information in any item be obtained from any other source? In some other manner?
- (d) Is the item as stated capable of misinterpretation? Could it be stated more simply?
- (e) Can the information be used for other purposes (other than the established objective)? Are there other potential users of the information?
- (f) If activities or offices repeatedly have nothing to report, is the report still necessary? If the report is still necessary, should the activities be required to submit a 'negative' report, or submit no report at all? If a negative report must be received, can a single statement, 'This is a negative report,' be placed on the report form and submitted on the due date, in lieu of completing every item on the periodic report?
- (g) Are memorandums of transmittal being used unnecessarily? The report form itself should be designed to include all necessary mailing and routing information without requiring transmittal correspondence.

c. Determine the Proper Level and Flow in the Reporting Pattern.

- (1) The reporting pattern is the established path along which information flows through an organizational unit. The reporting pattern should follow the pattern of organization and command, with information being summarized at various points where decisions are made or where responsibility is placed.
- (2) An analysis of the reporting pattern may point out defects in the pattern of organization or in the operations of individuals, which should be referred to proper authorities for action. The reporting of detailed information to the very top level in an organization should be given careful scrutiny and an endeavor made to stop unnecessary detailed reporting.
- (3) Details should be confined to the level where decisions are made or responsibility placed. Each report should fit into a complete picture and should be a logical part of that picture. Reported information should follow the lines

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of delegated authority but should not flow to levels higher than those at which decisions are made on the basis of the information. Good administration includes delegating authority to make decisions at levels where actual operations are carried out; good reporting stops detailed information at those same levels. A report should contain only information which is necessary for the recipient; it should not contain everything the preparing activity needs to know for its actual operations. The employees whose activities are covered by a report should be the first to see the report. Reporting systems should be flexible to allow for improvements based on operations.

- (4) The analyst should obtain a general knowledge of how the operator conducts his business and the aims of his programs. To determine proper level obtain accurate answers to the following questions:
 - (a) What is the reporting pattern of the requiring office? Does this report fit into that pattern?
 - (b) Do decisions made at this level require all of the information reported?
 - (c) Are program operations carried out at the same level where decisions are made?
 - (d) Would it expedite program operations to delegate to lower levels authority to make decisions.
 - (e) If decisions are made at the level which requires the report, but program operations are carried on at a lower level, can good decisions be made on the basis of this information? Would it improve quality of operations to delegate to the lower level authority to make decisions.
 - (f) Does the information reported follow the pattern of authority to make decisions?
 - (g) Are copies of this report required by all points to which they are sent?
 - (h) Is this the BEST method of reporting?

At this point the analyst should be prepared to make recommendations concerning (a) the proper level to which information should be reported, and (b) the necessary distribution of copies. Each copy of the report should be accounted for, making every effort to eliminate the possibility of duplicate files. Elimination may be made at

some levels. The analyst may also be able to make recommendations for delegating authority either to speed up program operations or to improve the quality of those operations.

d. Compare Value of Reports with the Cost of Compiling Them.

- (1) This area of analysis is necessarily a long-range part of the program, because it involves a detailed study of source records and the procedures for compiling, submitting, and summarizing required reports. In some instances, information is obtained for a report from source records which must be maintained whether or not a report is prepared. In other instances, it is necessary to establish source records and procedures solely for the purpose of compiling a report. Requiring offices may or may not have prescribed the types of source records or procedures. In some instances the manpower required to maintain source records for one report will vary widely between activities.
- (2) To make a thorough cost analysis, the analyst should obtain as exact figures as possible by:
 - (a) Obtaining detailed information from selected preparing activities or offices.
 - (b) Using established figures for the costs of handling forms and maintaining files.
 - (c) Investigating use of the report in the requiring office and the time spent in all phases of subsequent report handling such as reviewing and analyzing.
- (3) To determine costs and to prepare presentation of cost factors, the following questions must be accurately answered:
 - (a) What records are required at preparing levels solely for the preparation of this report? What do they cost in man hours? What are equipment costs?
 - (b) What feeder reports are required? What do they cost in man hours?
 - (c) What records are required at receiving levels solely for the processing of this report? What do they cost in man hours? What are equipment costs?

- (d) How many man hours are required for actual preparation, including posting to worksheets, compiling, typing, proofing, and reviewing?
- (e) How many man hours are required for analysis by those who receive reports, and for compiling data from these reports?
- (f) What are stowage costs, handling costs for each copy, and printing costs for the report forms used?
- (g) Does the established overall need for the report and its use justify the cost?

Section E. PLANNING AND DEVELOPING NEW
REPORTING SYSTEMS

1. Responsibility of the Reports Control Authority. To be of maximum service to the operating official, the Reports Control Authority is responsible for assisting him in developing reporting systems which provide effective management control over his programs. This responsibility involves:
 - a. Encouraging him to establish reporting systems to provide necessary controls.
 - b. Consulting with him on the data he needs.
 - c. Working out details of the reporting system, including the design of records and procedures and the development of instructions and directives.
 - d. Educating personnel in the use of reported data, the records, and procedures.
 - e. Evaluating the reporting system periodically to determine if it should be revised to conform with changing needs.
2. Management Controls Defined. Management controls provide information for the efficient coordination of men, money, and materials according to a plan. This information is in terms of precisely defined objectives, quantities, cost limits, and time schedules. Management controls may be divided into two classes:

a. Control of Program.

- (1) Relevance of programs in meeting needs for which the organization was established.
- (2) Effectiveness of programs.
- (3) Progress of programs.

b. Control of Operating Performance.

- (1) Whether the organization is currently performing in a way which assures program realization within satisfactory limits of cost and quality, and within established time schedules.
- (2) Availability of resources and facilities.

3. Essential Features and Characteristics of an Effective System of Control. The most popular form of control is the use of accounting, statistical, and narrative reports. Since management situations are made up of variable elements, there is no solution to apply to all of them. There are, however, these criteria of a control system which should be considered in developing or evaluating a reporting system:

- a. It must be possible to associate conditions with people responsible for them.
- b. Procedures to obtain, organize, and distribute information must be written, standard, and specific.
 - (1) The source of the information and method of obtaining it must be specified.
 - (2) The information itself must be defined.
 - (3) Methods to record and distribute the information relating it to other data must be detailed.
 - (4) Time schedules for each part of the control procedure must be established.
- c. There must be adequate provision for verifying the accuracy of the information used for control purposes.
- d. The system must be centrally administered and coordinated.
- e. The system must be economical of manpower, machinery, and materials.

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- f. The system must not be permitted to delay the work of the organization.
- g. There should be an adequate organization for interpreting the information, investigating irregular or unexplained changes in performance.
- h. There must be a basis for comparing the information in order to interpret it properly. These comparisons may be:
 - (1) Between current performance of two or more similar but independent operations.
 - (2) Between current performance of two or more individuals who are performing the same type of work.
 - (3) Between the current performance of an organization or individual and the performance of the same organization or individual during past period.
 - (4) Between actual performance and formal program or operating objectives.
 - (5) Between actual performance and management's unstated or informal desires, or beliefs as to what the performance should be.
 - (6) Between actual performance and specific standards of performance set either arbitrarily, on the basis of past performance, or after analysis to determine what the performance should be.
- i. Information must be made available while it is still current enough for use.
- j. The information should be obtained on a continuous basis as long as it has control significance.
- k. The system should be sufficiently flexible to allow reasonable tolerance for human imperfections and errors within the system.
- l. Control information should be organized to fit the requirements of the people who will use it at various levels of the organization.
- m. There must be adequate provision for constant adjustment of the system to fit changes in the management situation.

Section F. DISSEMINATING PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. Publishing Lists of Reports. Published lists of reports serve two main purposes: (a) They prevent the creation of additional reports by publicizing existing source of information, and (b) they serve as ready references to ensure the prompt and proper submission of reports. Each Reports Control Authority should therefore publish a list of the prepared and required reports under his jurisdiction. Such a list should contain:

- a. The reports control symbol.
- b. The title of the report.
- c. Form number or format.
- d. Frequency of submission and due date.
- e. Requiring directive(s).
- f. Distribution of the original and copies.
- g. The components or activities required to prepare the report.

Separate lists for required and prepared reports, and Headquarters and field reports, should be published if justified by the volume of reports.

2. Reporting Results of the Program. The chief of a component having a Reports Control Authority will want periodic reports of program progress. Also, the central Reports Control Authority, Management Staff, needs periodic information on program status in order to discharge its assigned responsibilities for: (a) Evaluating and reporting progress to higher authority; (b) coordinating program objectives; (c) determining problem areas; and (d) abstracting items of special interest for dissemination to all Reports Control Authorities. Each Reports Control Authority is therefore requested to submit the following information monthly to the chief of his component with a copy to the Chief, Records Management Division, Management Staff, within ten days after the end of the month:

- a. Statistical summary of activity covering the elements listed in paragraph 5, page 3.
- b. Narrative summary of activity covering:

- (1) Planned Projects - A project is planned when it has been scheduled but not started. A planned project should be

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reported only once. The title of the project and a brief statement of its purpose and scope should be furnished. Include estimated beginning date, potential program benefits, and estimated man hours that will be required.

- (2) Projects in Progress - A project is in progress from the time it is started until it is completed. Only those projects on which some action has been taken during the month should be reported.
 - (3) Completed Project - A project is complete when (1) recommendations are accepted and the new procedure has been installed, or (2) when recommendations are disapproved. A brief summary of the results obtained and the man hours expended should be given. It is recommended that exhibits be attached for major projects, which may be useful to other Reports Control Authorities.
 - (4) Problem Areas. Include program administration problems as well as reporting problems for which assistance from the Records Management Division is desired.
3. Disseminating Publicity. Each Reports Control Authority should be alert to possible ways of publicizing reports management and the benefits being derived from his program. Posters, fliers, brochures, staff meeting presentations, and individual discussions should each be used for variety. The Incentive Awards Program should also be publicized as a means of submitting suggestions for improving reports. The Records Management Division, Management Staff, will assist you in developing publicity projects.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF NEW OR REVISED REPORTING REQUIREMENT				DATE OF REQUEST		
TO:						
THROUGH:						
1. PERSON TO CONTACT REGARDING REPORT		NAME		ROOM NO.	BUILDING	PHONE
2. TITLE OF REPORT AND REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL IF ONE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED						
3. TYPE OF REPORTING REQUIREMENT		4. IF REVISED, STATE NATURE OF REVISION				
<input type="checkbox"/> NEW						
<input type="checkbox"/> REVISED						
5. LIST ANY REPORTS TO BE SUPERSEDED BY THIS NEW OR REVISED REPORTING REQUIREMENT				6. PROPOSED DURATION OF REPORT		
				<input type="checkbox"/> INDEFINITE		
				<input type="checkbox"/> TEMPORARY (<i>Indicate period</i>)		
7. CITE DIRECTIVES, AUTHORITIES OR INSTRUCTIONS ORIGINATED BY YOUR IMMEDIATE ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT WHICH REQUIRE THIS REPORT						
8. CITE OTHER CURRENT DIRECTIVES, AUTHORITIES OR INSTRUCTIONS AFFECTING THE REPORT						
9. REPORT FORMAT (<i>Form no., memo, machine tabulation, etc.</i>)		10. REPORTING FREQUENCY (<i>Daily, weekly, monthly, as situations occur, etc.</i>)		11. DATE REPORT IS DUE IN YOUR OFFICE		
12. DESCRIBE SUPPORTING MATERIAL TO BE SUBMITTED WITH REPORT						
13. ACTIVITIES OR COMPONENTS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THIS REPORT				14. DISTRIBUTION OF REPORT		
				ORIGINAL		
				COPIES		

15. DETAILED NEED FOR AND USE OF THIS REPORT (Include a statement of how your program or operations would be affected if the information you desire was not furnished.)

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☐ CONTINUED ON SEPARATE SHEET

REVIEW BY CHIEFS OF COMPONENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

☐ CONTINUED ON SEPARATE SHEET

DATE	TITLE	SIGNATURE
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RECOMMENDATIONS

☐ CONTINUED ON SEPARATE SHEET

DATE	TITLE	SIGNATURE
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	RETURNED APPROVED	REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL ASSIGNED	DATE
	RETURNED DISAPPROVED		
	COMMENTS ARE ATTACHED	TITLE	SIGNATURE

REPORT SURVEY		1. DATE OF SURVEY		2. TYPE OF REPORT	
				REQUIRED	PREPARED
3. PERSON TO CONTACT REGARDING REPORT	NAME	COMPONENT	ROOM NO. AND BLDG.		PHONE
4. REPORT TITLE					
5. AUTHORITIES OR DIRECTIVES REQUIRING THIS REPORT					
6. REPORTING FREQUENCY (Daily, weekly, monthly, as situations occur, etc.)			7. REPORT FORMAT (Form no., memorandum, machine tabulation, etc.)		
8. DATE REPORT IS DUE			9. NUMBER OF REPORTS RECEIVED/PREPARED ANNUALLY IF REPORT IS A "SITUATION" REPORT		
10. OFFICES OR ACTIVITIES REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THIS REPORT			11. DISTRIBUTION OF THIS REPORT ORIGINAL: COPIES:		
12. ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBER OF MAN HOURS REQUIRED TO PREPARE THIS REPORT ONE TIME. INCLUDE MAN HOURS REQUIRED AT ALL LEVELS TO MAINTAIN RECORDS, COLLECT DATA, PREPARE FEEDER REPORTS, AND COMPILE THE FINAL REPORT.					
13. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING AS APPROPRIATE TO EITHER A "REQUIRED" OR "PREPARED" REPORT, OR BOTH, USING SPACE 14 IF NECESSARY.					YES NO
A. DOES THIS REPORT DUPLICATE IN WHOLE OR IN PART ANY OTHER REPORT? IF SO PLEASE EXPLAIN.					
B. IS THE INFORMATION REPORTED IN MORE DETAIL, SUBMITTED MORE FREQUENTLY, OR GIVEN WIDER DISTRIBUTION THAN IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO SERVE THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE REPORT WAS ESTABLISHED?					
C. IS THIS REPORT THE RESULT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE OR PROCEDURAL PROBLEM WHICH SHOULD BE CORRECTED RATHER THAN REPORTED ON?					
D. COULD THE PURPOSES OF THIS REPORT BE SERVED BY DIRECT SUPERVISION OR INSPECTION, OR BY BRIEFINGS, STAFF MEETINGS, ETC.?					
E. HAS OFFICE ROUTINE EVER BEEN DISRUPTED OR HAS OVERTIME EVER BEEN REQUIRED TO MEET THE SUBMISSION DATE FOR THIS REPORT?					
F. DO YOU RECOMMEND THAT THE FORM OR FORMAT OF THIS REPORT BE REVISED WITH RESPECT TO: (1) SPACING? (2) WEIGHT OF PAPER? (3) POSSIBLE ELIMINATION OF TRANSMITTAL CORRESPONDENCE?					
G. IF THE REPORT IS REPRODUCED BY MIMEOGRAPH, DITTO, MULTILITH, ETC., DO YOU RECOMMEND THE PROCUREMENT OF REPRODUCIBLE MASTERS WITH HEADINGS, LINES, ETC. PREPRINTED THEREON TO EXPEDITE PREPARATION OF THE REPORT?					
H. WOULD YOUR OFFICE DISCONTINUE: (1) MAINTAINING (2) COMPILING THE DATA BEING SUBMITTED IN THIS REPORT IF THE REQUIREMENT FOR ITS SUBMISSION WERE RESCINDED?					

14. REMARKS (If you require this report, briefly state its purpose, and fully justify its continuance. State any contemplated action for continuing the report. Consider changes in conditions since the report was established. If you prepare this report, furnish a general opinion of its value. Cite any evidence or lack of evidence that the report is worth its cost. Recommend any improvements, including methods for preparing and submitting the report.)

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☐ CONTINUED ON SEPARATE SHEET

REVIEW BY CHIEF OF COMPONENT

RECOMMENDATIONS

☐ CONTINUED ON SEPARATE SHEET

DATE

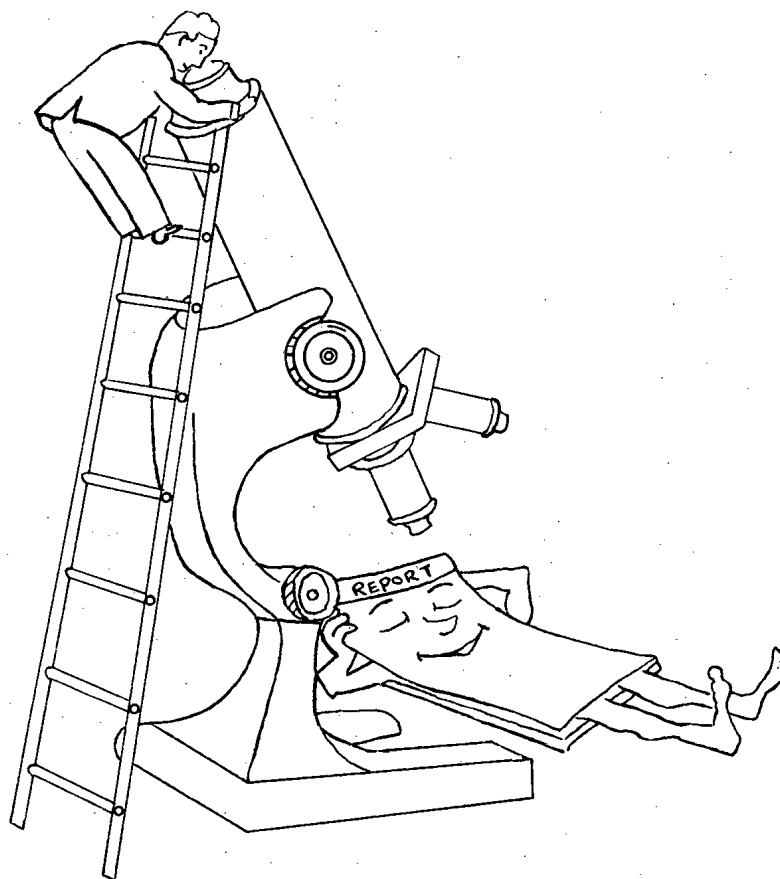
TITLE

SIGNATURE

ANALYZING

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OR MANAGEMENT

REPORTS



001069891
MANAGEMENT STAFF
RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION
NOVEMBER 1954

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INTRODUCTION

A sage old fire chief at a large naval base was being questioned about fire regulations. "What about reporting fire hazards?" he was asked. "If you mean in writing, heck no!" he replied (but probably in somewhat stronger terms). And he added, "By the time I got the word the darn place would be burned down!"

The Chief didn't know it, but he was practicing reports management. Simple and direct reporting of essential information was what he wanted. And it paid off, judging from his excellent fire prevention record.

Unfortunately, most Agency requirements for reports cannot be stated as simply, nor complied with so easily. Extensive activity requiring administrative or management control, a complex organization, and changing conditions tend to complicate the reporting picture. Thus an analysis of your reporting requirements is essential—at the time they are created and periodically thereafter. Here is your guide.

This pamphlet is not a complete course in reports analysis. Instead, it is a collection of what might be termed "thought starters," to create a consciousness of the keys to sound reporting, and to serve as a check list during your analysis. Additional copies may be obtained from the Reports and Correspondence Management Branch, Management Staff.

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ANALYZING REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS



PLANNING YOUR ANALYSIS

Analyzing requirements for reports is simply applying the logic: If the information isn't needed, don't ask for it. If a report is necessary, assure that only essential data is compiled and submitted by the simplest and most direct means.

But significant results cannot be achieved by hit or miss tactics. A planned analysis is necessary. Reports that are interrelated must be studied together. Some are alike according to the functions they serve or the subjects they cover. Others, sometimes called "feeder reports" are only small segments of a reporting network designed to provide top management with a single document of information. The relationship of these "feeders" to the end product must be considered.



QUESTIONING THE BASIC NEED FOR A REPORT

Is there a sound need for the report as a whole as well as for every item in the report? Consider these questions in making your decision...

- Is the information reported, appropriate to the assigned functions, responsibilities, or authority of the component requiring it?
- Does the report serve a purpose which could be accomplished some other way, such as through direct supervision or inspection?
- Does the need for the report result from an organizational or procedural problem which should be corrected rather than reported?
- Can the requiring office obtain the same information from another source or in a different format or manner, e.g., a copy of another report, a machine tabulation from punched cards maintained for another component, or copies of operating documents?
- Is the information reported actually and actively used as a basis for actions, plans, or decisions, and do these uses fully justify the cost required to prepare the report? Or asked another way--is full use being made of the information, or is it being gathered because "it's nice to know," or because some day there may be a use for it?

ANSWERING THE NEED

ESSENTIALS OF A GOOD REPORTING REQUIREMENT - Let's assume you're sure a report is needed in its entirety. That's a good start; but there are many other aspects of reporting that must be considered. Check for these...

Reporting Frequency - The reporting frequency must be consistent with the frequency with which the information is used. More frequent reporting is not justifiable. Furthermore, the frequency between each report should be of such length that significant changes are reflected. Programs on which information is reported often decelerate rapidly. Unless changed, the reporting frequency soon becomes unrealistic. Then too, the opposite may occur--the pace of a program is stepped up, or situations begin to happen so frequently that they should be summarized, rather than reported separately. Check a series of reports. What frequency is needed now; what is the trend?

Due Date - The date a report is due in an office should, if possible, be one convenient to the reporting activity. End-of-month, end-of-quarter, and end-of-year reporting should be avoided if possible since reporting workloads are heaviest at these times. Moreover, due dates should be based on working days, not calendar days. Determine the number of times the preparing office was unable to meet the due date. Also, how many times did a due date disrupt office routine to the detriment of operations? Was overtime ever required to meet the date?

Report Format

A good report format should meet these criteria...

- Be simple in design, and standard for each preparing activity.
- Provide for transmitting the report without covering correspondence.
- Be arranged so that the report can be prepared from records normally maintained by the preparing activities, yet designed to permit the recipient to locate information readily and apply it to his needs.

One of the surest ways to meet these criteria is to require that the report be submitted on an Agency form. Consider these additional advantages...

- Reports submitted on forms can be readily identified thus speeding their routing, processing, filing, and ultimate disposition (from a records retirement standpoint).
- Instructions for preparing and submitting the report can be placed on the form for ready reference.

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However, the fact that a report presently is being submitted on an Agency form does not exclude its format from a reappraisal. Requirements for information change. The format satisfactory yesterday may be inadequate today. For example...

- Is there sufficient space in each box for fill-in?
- Is the form printed on such heavy stock that the number of legible copies needed cannot be made at one typing?
- Are reports prepared in such volume that carbon interleaved snap-out sets would be advantageous?
- If copies are duplicated, do the masters (stencil, Ditto, multilith, etc.) contain the maximum amount of preprinted data?

Report Directive - Requirements for reports should be established by clear and complete written directives. Good directives mean good reporting! Consider these points...

**PROVIDING A SINGLE
SOURCE OF INSTRUCTIONS**

Cancel all previous directives which required the report, incorporating necessary past instructions in the new directive as an aid to personnel preparing reports.

PURPOSE AND USE

State clearly the purposes or uses of the data being collected. The Office which prepares the report needs to know the purposes and uses to (1) assure that the data reported will accomplish the objectives intended, and (2) make more accurate decisions in doubtful cases.

REPORT TITLE

Indicate the correct title of the report for later identification. Titles should be descriptive of contents.

DUE DATE OF REPORT

Specify the date on which the report is to arrive at its destination. For situation reports, specify how soon the report must be received after occurrence of the event. Establish a due date for a recurring report which allows the reporting workload to be more evenly distributed by the offices preparing and receiving the report.

**PERIOD OR SITUATION
COVERED**

Specify the period of time, 'as of' date, or precise situation to be covered by the report. If data from several different reports are to be correlated, assure that the periods covered in these reports are comparable.

**FIRST SUBMISSION
OF THE REPORT**

Specify when the requirement becomes effective, such as the date that the first recurring report is to be received, or the first period to be covered.

**TERMINATION OF
REPORT**

For a temporary report, specify exactly when it is to be discontinued.

PREPARING ACTIVITIES

State specifically the types of activities which are to prepare the report.

DISTRIBUTION

Specify the number of copies to be prepared. Specify where each copy is to be sent.

**FORMAT (IF NO FORM
IS PROVIDED)**

Specify the format for the items to be reported to (1) help insure uniformity in data reported and (2) simplify the transcription, comparison, evaluation, or other use of the data when it is received.

USE OF FORM

Be sure the form includes information on where the report is to be forwarded, and from whom it is sent ('from' and 'to' information), in order to avoid use of separate transmittal correspondence. Request offices not to submit covering transmittal correspondence with reports prepared on forms.

Specify where preparing offices are to secure supplies of the form, and the requisitioning procedure.

SOURCE OF DATA

Specify the source from which the information is to be obtained to (1) assist the preparing office in easy compilation, and (2) insure comparable data from all activities.

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**PROCEDURES FOR
COMPILING**

Specify recommended procedures for obtaining and compiling the data. This will (1) aid preparing offices to use the best methods, and (2) insure accuracy and consistency of the report.

WORDING

Give clear instructions on each item to be reported. Use simple active or imperative verbs (as 'Enter the total cost...'). Give only one instruction in a single sentence. Keep the sentence concise. Be sure that the instructions can be interpreted in only one way.

Need for Copies - A positive as well as a negative approach must be taken in determining the need. For instance, assure that all who have an interest in the report are receiving sufficient copies. Also, do the recipients have any recommendations for improving the report. On the other hand, copies of reports are costly. They increase the volume of records our Agency must handle, store, and dispose of. They slow down report preparation procedures. One extra copy can double typing and proofreading time if that copy makes two typing runs necessary. Check to make sure that every copy provided is serving a useful purpose. Ask recipients...

- ✓ Do they wish to remain on distribution?
- ✓ Can they obtain similar data from another source?
- ✓ Is all the data utilized? If not, which can be eliminated?

Consider the cost of each copy. Count your copies; make your copies count!

PREPARING AND SUBMITTING REPORTS - Methods of preparing and submitting reports are almost as varied as there are types of reports. However, here are a few pointers having general application.

- Are files and other records arranged in such a manner that data can be readily extracted?
- Do fiscal and other accounting records contain control totals so that the accuracy of detailed data can be checked?
- Can fiscal and other accounting data be maintained on a cumulative basis to eliminate last minute workloads?

- For historical, progress, and other documentary-type reporting, is a brief running account of significant events and accomplishments maintained to avoid trying to "think back" over the period?
- Do graphs and charts reflect cumulative data? This is, is information added to the same reproducible master each reporting period?
- Do reproduction masters (Ditto, multilith, stencil, etc.) contain the maximum amount of preprinted data?
- Can data be recorded for photographic reporting, e.g., maintained currently on flex-o-line strips, "menu boards," or production control boards?
- Can machine tabulation procedures be used?
- Are reports that are self explanatory forwarded without transmittal correspondence? Reports are considered self explanatory if submitted on forms containing spaces for 'To,' 'From,' and the signature of the signing official.



SUMMARY

1. Plan your analysis, keeping in mind those reports that are interrelated.
2. Determine management's basic needs for reports.
3. Assure that the following essentials of a good reporting requirement answer these needs...
 - ✓ Realistic reporting frequency.
 - ✓ Practical due date.
 - ✓ Efficient format.
 - ✓ Clear and complete written directive.
 - ✓ Realistic requirements for copies.
4. Ensure that reports are prepared and submitted by the most efficient means.

If these points are considered, you can be assured of...

FEWER REPORTS, BETTER REPORTS, AT LESS COST!

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SAMPLE FORM MEMORANDUM FOR INITIATING A REPORT REAPPRAISAL
OUTSIDE THE COMPONENT OF A REPORTS CONTROL AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM FOR: (Chief of the component)
ATTENTION: (Chief of the organizational element within
the above component which submits the report)
SUBJECT: (Title of the report)
REFERENCE: (Cite the authority for the report)

1. The ABC Office has established a reports management program which provides for the periodic reappraisal of requirements for reports. One means of conducting these re-evaluations is to solicit recommendations from those offices which submit reports to us.

2. Our records indicate that your organization prepares subject report in accordance with the referenced authority. Since an appraisal of this report at your level would materially assist us in our review, we would appreciate the completion and return of one copy of the attached Report Survey form within approximately ten days. Any additional material which might augment our review would also be appreciated.

3. The attached form contains questions which provide criteria for evaluating the report. Additional guidance may be obtained from the pamphlet "Analyzing Requirements for Administrative and Management Reports," obtainable from our staff. For this pamphlet or for further information please call us on extension 1234.

A. A. ADAMS
Reports Control Authority
ABC Office

ATTACHMENTS
Form No. 521 (2)

SAMPLE FORM MEMORANDUM FOR INITIATING A REPORT REAPPRAISAL
WITHIN THE COMPONENT OF A REPORTS CONTROL AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM FOR: (Chief of the organizational element which
requires or prepares the report)

SUBJECT: (Title of the report)

REFERENCE: (Cite the authority for the report)

1. One of the functions of our Reports Management Program is to provide for a periodic reappraisal of requirements for reports. In this manner nonessential reporting is disclosed and eliminated, and essential reporting systems are further improved.

2. Our records indicate that your organization (prepares/ requires) subject report in accordance with the referenced authority. Your assistance in reappraising this report is therefore requested. Please have the member of your staff responsible for this report complete the attached Report Survey form and return it to us within ten days. Any directives, correspondence, instructions, revised forms or other material concerning this report which have not been furnished us should also be forwarded.

3. The attached form contains questions which provide criteria for evaluating the report. Additional guidance may be obtained from the pamphlet "Analyzing Requirements for Administrative and Management Reports," obtainable from our office. For this pamphlet or for further information please call us on extension 1234.

A. A. ADAMS
Reports Control Authority

ATTACHMENTS
Form No. 521 (2)

REPORTS/ FORMS ANALYSIS CHART OF RECURRING DATA												PAGE 1	OF 1	PAGES 1		
ACTIVITY REPORTS MANAGEMENT BRANCH				TITLE OF FORM												
DATE OF ANALYSIS 21 April 1955				<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Employee's Notice of Injury or Disease</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Official Superior's Report of Injury</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Claim for Compensation</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Report of Injury</div> </div>												
ANALYZED BY A. A. Adams																
ITEMIZED DATA				FORM NO. CA-1	FORM NO. CA-2	FORM NO. CA-4	FORM NO. 379	FORM NO.	FORM NO.	FORM NO.	FORM NO.	FORM NO.	FORM NO.	FORM NO.	FORM NO.	TOTAL
1	Name of employee			X	X	X	X									4
2	Place of employment			X	X	X	X									4
3	Time of injury			X	X	X	X									4
4	Place where injury occurred			X	X	X	X									4
5	Cause of injury			X	X	X	X									4
6	Nature of injury			X	X	X	X									4
7	Names of witnesses			X	X		X									3
8	Statements of witnesses				X											1
9	Attending physician's report				X	X	X									3
10																
11																
12																
TOTAL				7	9	7	8									31

DD FORM 85
1 OCT 49

REPLACES WD AGO FORM 554, 20 APR 44, WHICH MAY BE USED.